

Study Guide Questions

Series: Connected

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Message: Connected to the Vine

Date: 01/01/2023



ENGAGE THE SCRIPTURES

Memory Verse: 1 Timothy 4:8

For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.

Read John 15:1-8

- When considering your personal friendships, what do you do to stay connected with them? Consider someone who you would identify as your best friend. How did they get to fill that role? What can we learn about being/feeling connected to those around us that we can apply to our relationship with Jesus?
- This passage of scripture uses a lot of agrarian symbolism to help the reader visualize and understand the message. What symbolism is used for Jesus? In this heavenly garden, what role does God play? Who are the branches? What is the fruit? How does this imagery help you understand what Jesus is teaching?
- What is the importance of understanding that God the Father prunes us? In what way has God been removing dead or useless pieces from your character? Describe a season of life where God has pruned you. What happened? What did you learn? What was the result?
- Do you value prayer and Scripture reading? How do you prioritize these practices in your life? On average, how much time do you spend doing each practice during the week? How have these two items brought life to your spiritual walk?
- What steps can you take to develop a more intimate relationship with Christ?



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SPIRITUAL FRIENDSHIP

Read John 15:9-17

- Jesus tells us nearly a dozen times to remain/abide in Him. How do we do this? (v.10) Jesus uses a conditional statement to describe those who are His friends. What does it take for us to be called a friend of Jesus? (v.14) Obedience is a significant issue that we sometimes minimize because God also offers grace and forgiveness. Talk about the importance of each and how we should live in the tension between these two characteristics.
- Jesus gives a command (not a suggestion) that we are to love one another. Do you struggle to consistently be obedient to this command? If so, what impedes you from showing love to others? Share about a time when you were not loving to others. What did/can you learn from your bad example so that you can be ready to respond differently next time? What are some practical ways you can show love to others?
- Reread v.16. In this passage Jesus shares that He chose and appointed each of us to go out and produce lasting fruit. When you hear these words from Jesus, how do the comments and directives resonate with you? How are you actively functioning as one who is sent? When you consider the fruit being produced from your life, what will remain after your death?
- Will God give you anything and everything you ask for as long as you ask for it in Jesus' name? None of us believes that nor have we experienced that to be true. What kind of requests can we make in Jesus' name that we can be assured will be answered?

A helpful article I read about this likened police officers acting 'in the name of the law' to Christians asking for things 'in the name of Jesus'. In neither case is the person (police officer or Christian) forcing the greater authority (law or Jesus) to do something they are not willing to do. The Christian is subservient to God's will and must ask for things that align with His will in order for the prayer to be answered.



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